FINAL REPORT

19970365

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER FOR SASKATCHEWAN FRUIT INDUSTRY

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Canada

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Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association

IDO Final Report

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"We Grow It–U Enjoy It–Saskatchewan Fruit"

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The IDO Project has been assisted and guided by the SFGA Board Members and Staff. They are as follows:

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Staff:
Bruce Anderson, IDO: November 1998-May 1, 2001
Charon Blakley, Secretary: February 1998 – October 31, 2001
Helen Fraser, Secretary: November 1, 2001 – Feb 15, 2002

Executive Summary:

Summary Project 1- Grower Profile Database:

SFGA's major accomplishment on this project is highlighted through the success of compiling Industry statistics that show Sask. Production, acres and GDP of the saskatoon berry industry in Sask. In addition, since starting this project the SFGA membership has continued to increase year over year. In 1998 the membership was 99 and at Nov. 1, 2002 the membership was 168. Other accomplishments are as follows:

- The data base is complete and up to date. All information in the SFGA files has been compiled and entered in the data base. The data base now combines the membership information with the first SFGA survey. The survey has been re-administered to association members. Callbacks are underway. Results will be compiled and distributed in the spring. Along with the data base, the SFGA has also conducted a processor survey, a price survey, and compiled the Census Canada findings. This data is vital to guide and direct the association.
- Associate membership has shown strong continued growth since June 8, 2001.
- Census Canada's findings were released by November 2002. The Industry finally has it's benchmark Fact Sheet to distribute to members, stakeholders, the media, buyers and other stakeholders. This fact sheet demonstrates the incredible growth of the Saskatchewan fruit industry over the last 14 years.
- The SFGA Strategic and Business Plan 2002, the Industry Fact Sheet, and the Feasibility Study on the Use of Off-Shore Labour are the
  outcome of Project 1.

Summary Project 2 – Build Awareness of the Fruit Industry:

The efforts that have gone into the promotion of the Fruit Industry in Saskatchewan has been significant. The ultimate success for our Industry is in the fact that at the S.I.A.L. show in Montreal, April 2-4, 2003 (International Food, Beverage, and Wine Tradeshow) we were in a position to promote the saskatoon berry industry internationally. A member of our Association was successful in getting over 14 International contacts interested in Saskatoon Berries for their markets. The results of all the hard work done to date will likely come to fruition in the next couple of years. However, it is all the small successes along the way that have helped in the achievement in the international market place. These are highlighted below.

- The SFGA demonstrated an increased awareness of the fruit industry by promoting fruit to all potential markets: u-pick, farm gate, farmer's market, retail, wholesale and niche markets. Ongoing promotion and awareness campaigns included: Fruit Production Extension Production meetings; representation at trade shows; the Summer U-Pick Promotions (which included distribution of a U-Pick brochure and recipe cards, billboards, press releases, radio advertising); The Fabulous Fruit Contest; the release of the 2002 SFGA Strategic Plan and Business Plan and follow-up presentations to stakeholders; the 2002 Saskatoon Berry Festival which attracted 10,000 people; the Annual Conferences and Field Days (average attendance was 73); Promotion on the Anti-oxidant properties of Saskatoon berries; Joint Promotions with other provinces, commodity groups and private industry.
- Much effort has been placed on building momentum and promoting Saskatchewan fruit crops to the Saskatchewan consumer and to a wider marketplace. Through these activities, the SFGA experienced increased media attention, high volume of traffic at trade shows and promotions, increased attendance at field days and conferences, more new members joining the association.
- Saskatchewan Berry Partners are currently distributing frozen berries to Federated Co-operative and embarking on new venture to the United Kingdom. They have held several meetings to invite new growers to participate.

Summary Project 3- Online Fruit Trading Exchange:

SFGA has bragging rights when it comes to the development, maintenance and growth of one of the best Web sites in Saskatchewan's Horticulture Industry. The collaboration efforts of the University of Saskatchewan, Direct West, SFGA, Growers and Processors and our driving force our Industry Development Officer has made this one of the most extensive resource sites in the Industry. Provided below is highlights of the Web site functionality.

- One measurement of success is members participation in different aspects of the site: The marketplace area has all members listed on the Find a Grower section, 10 growers listed in the Find a Product section, 10 growers listed in the Find an Outlet section and 10 growers listed in the Bulk Purchases section.
- The web site has been successful in distributing information and bringing together interested stakeholders in Saskatchewan's fruit industry. It is a point of first contact and we have been able to provide information such as recipes and promotion of events to consumers and non-members. More specific information such as the Fruit Production in Saskatchewan/Industry Fact Sheet serve to educate stakeholders.
- The members-only side on the site has meant that technical information such as research, propagation and establishment, news bulletins, upcoming events, and suppliers can be made available to members in a timely and cost efficient way.
- Links to members and supplier sites support E-commerce capabilities.

Significant progress has been made and will continue to be made in this area. Continued effort will be placed on improving content.

Summary Project 4- Centralize Research Information:

A big part of the success of the centralized research information undertaken as part of this project is due in large part to the extensive work that went into aligning this project with the SFGA web site. Other major initiatives in this area is the efforts put into the co-ordination of the three provincial fruit associations such that duplication has been virtually eliminated. SFGA has been very successful in raising dollars through the use of fee based services to our membership. Over the course of the last four years an excess of $17,000.00 have been raised through the SFGA's many initiatives. The initiatives are as follows:

- The average attendance at Field Days and the Annual Conference and Annual meeting over the last two years is 75 people. These events are opportunities to learn about new crops and research methods which will assist them in their orchards.
- A total of $13,000 was raised to undertake the nutrient analysis of saskatoon berries. Contributors were: Prairie Fruit Growers Association, Fruit Growers Society of Alberta, Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association, Prairie Berries, Prairie Fruit Journal, Prairie Natural Processing Inc., D'nA, The Saskatoon Farm, The Berry Basket, and Heavenly Hills Orchard.
- The members-side of the web site includes all available fruit research for the use of growers. It is password protected so that only members have access to this information. Hard copies of some of the papers are also available. There are links to other sites where appropriate. Fruit research has been secured from ADF, Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agricultural Research Institute and individual researchers. To date, there are 60 papers available electronically and more to be added.
- The Fruit Production in Saskatchewan / Industry Fact Sheet is a compilation of the latest Canada Census information, industry database findings, and processor survey. This fact sheet demonstrates incredible growth in the Saskatchewan fruit industry over the last 13 years.
- The Seasonal Workers Diagnostic was a result of the latest research and statistics. The diagnostic demonstrated that the SFGA had a grower with an immediate need and that with projected growth and development in the industry, more growers will require this program in the future. The program is administered by Human Resources Development Canada to allow off-shore labour to work in Saskatchewan. The program has been initiated with the SFGA as one of the participating groups. To date, one grower intends to participate in the pilot program.
- Promotion and support of current health-related research – saskatoon berry antioxidant research completed by Dr. Kitts and Riverbend Plantation.
- A 'Seager Wheeler Fruit Production School' has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2003 at the Travelodge in Saskatoon to address the needs of new and beginning growers on the production of apples, saskatoons, sour cherries, strawberries, raspberries and newer fruit such as honeysuckle. SFGA will attend to promote association and fruit growing in the province.
- Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan fruit associations are co-operating informally on several initiatives, such within the Canadian Horticulture Council, with On-Farm Food Safety initiatives, accessing resources in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Formal co-

operation through participation in the Grading Standards for Saskatoons, Nutrient Analysis of Saskatoon Berries and the SFGA Strategic and Business Plan in 2002.

- Minor use registration of Bartlett Superior 70 Oil, insecticide for saskatoons in 2002, CHC AAFC has applied for approval of two more minor use pesticides.

Project 4 successfully centralised research and information dissemination.

Summary Project 5- Quality Assurance:

The quality assurance initiative has only really begun to take hold in the last 6months. Much of the work in this area was delayed because of the National efforts being driven by the Canadian Horticulture Council relative to On-Farm-Food Safety guidelines. The intent was to put in place national standards and guidelines with implementation at the regional level. Much work still needs to be done in this area but with increased pressure from retailers, wholesalers and processors for assurances of safe food and traceability this will become a priority for the entire industry. Grading standards, certification, quality initiatives are as follows:

- SFGA participated in the Train the Trainer session with James Wiens, Springside Farms Co. Ltd. and Clarence Peters, SAFRR Provincial Fruit Specialist becoming Trainers for the SFGA. As a follow-up to this, James Wiens presented a Quality-First session at the Annual Conference on November 1, 2002 to introduce the topic and determine the interest in a training session for fruit growers. From the positive response one of the first Canadian On-Farm Food Safety (COFFS) Seminars for fresh fruit and vegetables was held on February 21 and 22 in Saskatoon. About 20 attended. Topics covered included fertilizers and chemicals used on the production site, water quality, pest control, personal hygiene, good management practices including record keeping, crisis management and cleanliness of harvesting containers, packing materials, mechanical equipment and transportation vehicles. Potential sources of microbiological, chemical and physical hazards were identified when taking produce from the field through to the shipping point. Participants received CFIA-reviewed On-Farm Food Safety Guidelines manuals to use when inspecting their own operations. This manual is only available when enrolled in the seminar.
- Grading standards were ratified at the SFGA Annual meeting, November 1, 2002 in Saskatoon. From this, they will be presented at a national level with the assistance of the Canadian Horticulture Council.
- Saskatchewan Berry Partners renewed contract with Federated Co-operative. They have been using the draft grading standards. This group will be shipping 200,000 lbs. to United Kingdom in July 2003. Leadership, in the area of grading standards has been provided by this group. National grading standards will be very important to securing and maintaining international markets.

Summary Project 6 – Market Opportunities:

SFGA has taken an active role in supporting the individual growers committed to developing the collaboration in developing new markets and work on development of the infrastructure. The first major success in this area was the development of a value chain grower group lead by SFGA's past president which was successful in introducing frozen saskatoon berries into the retail chain through Federated Co-operative.

The objective of Project 6 was to help growers develop new markets for fruit and support the development of the necessary infrastructure. Significant progress has been made by the value chain group and the SFGA. The achievements are as follows:

- The Saskatchewan Berry Partners, renewed their contract with Federated Co-op and are planning to supply a contract in the United Kingdom in July 2003. To do this, they need to expand their group. They have held two meetings, inviting growers from Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, to participate and collectively market their fruit. Key to this are the issues of maintaining a consistent, high quantity and quality of fruit at a fair price.
- The results of the SFGA survey, Census Canada's saskatoon berry acreage results, the Native Fruit Development Program's research on production and a telephone survey to the major fruit processors in Saskatchewan helped to determine the Fruit Production in Saskatchewan for 2002 (Industry Fact Sheet). This information, along with the statistics from Alberta and Saskatchewan predicts supply of saskatoon berries for the fresh, frozen and processed market.
- Grower map is expanded to include all growers, not just U-Pick
- Marketplace on the website has been expanded to include 4 areas: Find a Grower, Find a Product, Find an Outlet and a section for Bulk Purchases.
- Conference 2002 theme was marketing. There were 75 growers attending who learned from speakers and each other the importance of 'growing a product with the end in mind.'
- Summer Field Day and Tour was at the University of Saskatchewan and the Food Centre. Growers and processors had the opportunity of seeing new varieties at the U of S and state of the art processing facilities at the Food Centre and meeting resource people who could help them achieve their goals.
- Price survey was completed this summer and results were distributed to the membership.
- Processor telephone survey helped to identify quantity of fruit processed in Saskatchewan.
- Compiled fruit utilisation research from across Canada to determine what information is available. This research is available electronically on the web site as well as some available in hard copy through the association.
- Filling domestic and international inquiries for information on fruit crops, particularly saskatoon berries.

- An activity identified in the 2002 Strategic and Business Plan is to determine what types of value-added uses, other than jams and jellies, are appropriate for saskatoon berries. To make good decisions, the SFGA needs to identify the trends, understand what the consumer wants and investigate the available opportunities. Dr. Shika Agblor, SAFRR is assisting the SFGA in this regard. The Prairie Fruit Growers Society of Alberta have expressed interest in collaborating on this initiative. Dr. Janet Panford, IRAP has been approached to see if they will assist us in gathering competitive intelligence in this potential market. This activity has been initiated and will continue for the next few years.

Project 1 – Grower Profile Database

Objective: Develop an extensive grower profile database.

Measures:

- Produce and distribute grower directory.
- Work with industry to provide accurate statistics on the size of the industry.
- Increase associate membership.

Activity	Date	Status
1. Collect information on growers using a telephone survey. Results: • Contracted with SWP Communication Centre to conduct survey of all known growers (SFGA membership, SAF Provincial Fruit Specialist and Extension Agrologists and U. of S. contact lists). • Approximately 600 growers were identified. Strategy redeveloped. New and potential new members will be surveyed as they join the association or as identified. The survey will be re-administered at the end of the AFIF project to determine progress and results (these would be measured by increased acreages, improved farm management practises, movement from u-pick to commercial sales). • The data base is complete and up to date. All information in the SFGA files has been compiled and entered in the data base. The data base now combines the membership information with the first SFGA survey. Survey re-administered to association members. Callbacks are underway. Results will be compiled and distributed in the spring.	03/30/01 06/04/01 31/03/03	First round of surveys complete. Ongoing. Ongoing.
2. Attempt to contact growers who we know are growing fruit at a large scale but did not participate in survey for whatever reason. Results: • Out of 28 large growers (>5 acres) SFGA has surveyed 21 growers. • For this year, the survey will only focus on members within the association. Large scale growers will continue to be an important segment of our survey.	03/30/01 31/03/03	Follow up surveys with remaining 7 growers will be completed 1st quarter 2001. This aspect of the plan still in process. Change in IDO and secretary will necessitate extension of deadline and completion. Ongoing.

3. Input information on a database that can be used by SFGA. Results: • Access database built and data entry completed to date. • Copies of Access database reside with Helen Fraser, Sandy Purdy & IDO. • The data base is complete and up to date. All information in SFGA files has been compiled and entered in the data base. The database now combines the membership information with the SFGA survey.	Ongoing. 03/30/00 01/01/03	Complete. Ongoing.
4. Contact Census Canada to compare our information to what they have. Explore how we can validate acreages and fruit types to get an accurate reflection of the industry. Results: • Census Canada has identified saskatoons as a separate crop on their agricultural survey administered a few months ago. • Census Canada's findings were released by November 2002. The Industry finally has it's benchmark Industry Fact Sheet to distribute to members, stakeholders, the media and the public. This fact sheet demonstrates the incredible growth of the Saskatchewan fruit industry over the last 14 years	11/30/01 01/11/03	Follow up with Census Canada for results. Results not available until 2003. Clarence Peters and IDO will continue to press for results. Completed.
5. Determine how the data collected from our survey will be used to make future decisions on direction, resources and funding. Results: • Data from the survey allowed the Board to make decisions on funding support, resource allocation and production using crops and quantities as supported by the survey results. • Data from survey and Census Canada findings was used to develop SFGA Strategic and Business Plan 2002, the Industry Fact Sheet, and the Feasibility Study on the Use of Off-Shore Labour. The data was vital to provide information to guide and direct the association.	06/30/00 01/11/02	Complete. Refer to survey for future decisions.
6. Develop on-going process to ensure data is kept current. Results: • New growers are sent survey and member profile information is kept on the Access database. • Send profile of individual grower with membership renewal commencing Oct. 2001. • On-going assessment of additional information will be needed to promote marketing and promotion needs.	09/30/00	Complete.

7. Write an executive summary of survey findings to present to the stakeholders in industry. Results: • AFIF (Abdul Jalil, Ph.D.), SFGA membership (Annual conference), Saskatchewan Agriculture & Food (Strategic Planning Session), U of S. Research & Development (Bob Bors and Richard St. Pierre), Chemical & Equipment Suppliers (future activity). • Secretary/treasurer and IDO will use results from survey and information from SAF to develop Industry Fact Sheet. • Benchmark Industry Fact Sheet developed. Distributed to membership at annual meeting, media, government, University of Saskatchewan, buyers and other stakeholders.	05/30/00 01/09/02 01/11/02	Complete with the exception of Chemical & Equipment Suppliers. Ongoing as more contacts are initiated. In process. Industry fact sheet will be available for publication in November 2002. Complete. Will be updated on regular basis.
8. Use information from survey to print directories and produce brochures with map of members. Results: • Information used to produce brochures which were distributed to growers and SAF Extension Agrologists. • Information used in 2001 promotional strategy • Information used on web site map • Fact sheet placed on web site and information will be incorporated in future publications.	06/30/00 06/30/01 01/20/02 01/11/02	Complete. Occurring annually. Ongoing.

Project 2 – Build Awareness of the Fruit Industry

Objective: Develop and implement a promotional strategy targeted at increasing consumer awareness of fresh fruit available in Saskatchewan.

Measures:

- Growers experience an increased awareness of their fruit.
- Local retail opportunities present themselves for growers.

Activity	Date	Status
1. With information collected from the industry survey, create an overall marketing strategy targeted at grower needs. Results: • A broad marketing strategy was developed and initiated for 2001 to build on the successes of the u-pick strategy from the previous season. This strategy was developed to include farm gate, farmer's market, wholesale, restaurant, processors, and any other niche market sales. It consisted of an up-dated u-pick brochure(distribution: 9800 to members, 2700 to tourism booths, 2500 to museums, parks, and individuals) a series of four recipe cards(20,000 distributed to members), localized media releases(field day summary published in the Fort Times(Fort Qu'Appelle) and Indian Head News(Indian Head, Sask) by Susan Kalscits, press releases(Farm and Food release, strawberry press release), radio advertising(112 -30 second commercials through CJWW and CKRM starting July 7-August 31), classified advertising(3 consecutive weeks in 85 weekly newspapers). The overall message was "Buy Saskatchewan Fruit!" Consumers were directed to the toll free number (1-877-97-FRUIT) and the web site (www.saskfruit.com) for more information.	Ongoing	2001 strategy completed. Results from evaluation of strategy and discussion at 2001 annual meeting indicate continuing with the same initiatives for 2002. Ongoing Activity.
• Over 4359 visits were received on the web site from March, 2001 – January, 2001. They were as follows: March – 609, April – 685, May – 494, June – 477, July – 673, August – 30, September – 170, October –236, November – 296, December – 295, January - 432. There were 40 telephone inquiries requesting further information.	01/28/02	Ongoing Activity.
• Continuing to narrow in on supply and demand issues. The toll-free number and the recently initiated matchmaker component on the web site served to link growers of fruit with buyers of fruit (consumers, processors, wholesales).	11/15/01	Recipe provided to Saskatchewan
• Advertisement placed in Saskatchewan Tourism magazines to promote the u-picks during the tourist season.		Tourism for inclusion in 2002 Tourism magazine.
• Joint promotional activity between the Saskatchewan Dairy Foundation, Temple Gardens Mineral Spa and SFGA (enter draw for one-night stay at Temple Gardens by picking fruit at local u-pick operations).		The Saskatchewan Dairy Foundation increased their sponsorship from $1700.00 in 2001 to $2500.00 for 2002
• SFGA Booth display at PFRA 100th Anniversary(on July 12/01) and also at Saskatchewan Home Economics Teachers' Association/Association of Saskatchewan Home Economists joint conference(September 20-22, 2001)		
• Beginning to explore opportunities with other partners(ie)Heart and Stroke foundation.		

• Networking with Agriculture in the Classroom organization to promote initiatives. • Attended the on November 20, 2001. Chris Diana, chef and member of Team Saskatchewan, prepared Spiced Saskatoon Taste of Saskatchewan food demo at Agribition Berry compote for 200 people to sample. The samples were well received and people were impressed with the size of the berries and that they are available year-round in the supermarket. • Provided slides for Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food's Digital Storage and Retrieval System project. An immediate benefit was the table shot of saskatoon berries which appeared as the cover shot on the Taste of Saskatchewan cookbook. This booklet was given to all the people who attended a demo at the Taste of Saskatchewan through Agribition week. Many initiatives to increase awareness were completed from November 1, 2001 – March 31, 2003. They include the following: • Fruit Extension Production Meetings - members and IDO promoted the SFGA at many of the Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization Meetings held across the province this year. • Promotions and Trade Events - Vegetable Growers Conference, Mar. 1, 2002; Opportunities Conference, Mar. 20,21, 2002; Hort Week at the U of S, July 23-26,2002, unmanned booth; Wine Makers Dinner, Sept. 25, 2002, Bessborough, Saskatoon, provided product, Crop Production Show, January 6 – 10, 2003. • Summer U-Pick promotion - U-Pick brochure with wider distribution (museums, tourist information booths, U of S, Garden Centres…), Temple Gardens Getaway Package contest, radio advertising (CKRM 620, Saskatoon, CJWW 600, Prince Albert, CKBI 900), advertising in the Saskatchewan Naturally Magazine. • Fabulous Fruit Contest - Sept 2001-May 2002, 30 high school students participated, Five category winners and overall, grand prize winner were awarded prizes of cash and fruit baskets. Ads to announce winners were placed in the Prairie Post, Swift Current; Moose Jaw Times Herald; Northwest Herald, Unity; Kipling Citizen; and Western Producer. The recipes and prize-winners are posted on the SFGA web site. • Strategic Planning Session - June 10 - November 1, 2002, completed, delivered to membership at annual meeting, presentations have been made to funders, boards, government to inform and make them aware of the SFGA's focussed strategy. • Saskatoon Berry Festival, July 27, 2002, Saskatoon - The event was in conjuction with the Saskatoon Farmers Market. There were 10,000 people in attendance, 500 pies and berry products sold throughout the market, a restaurant challenge (4 local chefs presented their best saskatoon dessert) and entertainment. Both the pie tender and the event attracted much interest from the public and the media. • The Farm Gate and Beyond, Nov. 1&2, 2002, Saskatoon - The first conference to focus on marketing. • Networking with Other Associations - Strategic Alliance, networking with Fruit Growers Society of Alberta and Prairie Fruit Growers Association, joint nutrient analysis initiative, increased presence in		Dairy Farmers of Saskatchewan agreed to sponsor the 2003 Fruit and Cream Brochure. SFGA will use recipes on web site and in future promotions. Next steps to expand promotions to include chefs and restaurants. Plans underway for 2003. Nutrient analysis complete. Associations and private industry working together to undertake this activity.

the Prairie Fruit Journal; preliminary efforts have been made to network within province with other horticulture associations. An effort has been made to find appropriate health-related partner to do joint promotions. • Much effort has been placed on building momentum and promoting Saskatchewan fruit crops to the Saskatchewan consumer and to a wider marketplace.	31/03/03	Promotions will continue to be an important way to create awareness.
2. Work with an agency to develop and implement a promotional campaign. • Results: IDO, secretary and board developed and implemented strategy. Billboard campaign budget was reallocated to fund entire promotion. Evaluation and results determined that strategy met needs of growers. • Summer promotional strategy was implemented using the resources within the association – IDO, secretary and board were implementers. Many low-cost methods were successfully implemented.	Complete. Ongoing. Ongoing.	2000 and 2001 activities completed. 2002 activities are currently underway. Ongoing.
3. Assign a person to act as a communication contact with media to promote Saskatchewan fruit. Results: • President of SFGA has volunteered interviews. • IDO conducts news releases to the SWNA, provincial dailies, and Western Producer. Extensive promotional opportunities presented themselves from November 2001 Conference, Value Chain Group Frozen Saskatoon Berry Launch and Fabulous Fruit contest. Press releases included with this report. • Board, IDO and association members will be attending and promoting the association at the 2002 Fruit Seminars conducted by SAF. • Promotion of Conference, On-Farm Food Safety Seminar, Health findings (Antioxidant in Saskatoon berries) were promoted by contact with media. Nutrient analysis results will be promoted prior to U-Pick season. Nutrient Analysis results in the form of a Saskatoon/Blueberry comparison chart currently promoted at SIAL Montreal in April 2003 and at a restaurant trade show in Alberta in April 2003.	Ongoing. Ongoing. Initiated 01/29/02-08/02/02 31/03/03	President or designate is the spokesperson for SFGA. Ongoing.
4. Develop fruit recipes to provide to other food groups such as pork, chicken, beef, buffalo, seafood, etc., to help promote the use of fruit products. SFGA saskatoon berry recipe was used on Federated Coop Gold frozen saskatoon berry package. Results: • Gained access to Food Preservation Database, a collection of 409 recipes, procedures and techniques using Saskatchewan fruits and vegetables. This project was funded by the Agriculture Development Fund in 1989. The fruit recipes have been selected and sorted according to type and are available to consumers and growers on the web site and for the SFGA in promotional brochures, recipe cards and press releases. • Fabulous Fruit Contest was initiated to create awareness of Saskatchewan Fruit among Saskatchewan High School students and their families. Contest ends May 2002. This was launched at the SHEETA conference and since then a mass mailout to 386 schools has been sent, as well as promotion to	Ongoing 07/01/01 Initiated 10/01/01	Plans are to increase activities in this area. Recipes have been included on website and used for SFGA Recipe cards. Recipes will be collected and published in a book used for future brochures.

weeklies via the Farm and Food report and the Western Producer. • Fabulous Fruit Contest winning results were promoted in local newspapers and the Western Producer. Recipes are posted on the web-site.	01/11/03	Complete.
5. Educate fruit growers on marketing their fruit. Results: • Contact was made by IDO with Joan Fielden, Ontario Berry Growers Association to network. • Formation of Western Canada Small Bush Fruit Development Initiative (also known as the Western Alliance). The goal of this organization is to "develop and expand the small bush fruit industry contributing to the agricultural diversification and economic prosperity of citizens of western Canada."(draft proposal) Sandra Purdy, SFGA President is the provincial representative to this group. Contacts with this umbrella organization and participating provincial associations will help to further our own objectives. • Specifically, the following objectives further the aims of our association and fit this iniative: ➢ establish a highly efficient and effective communications network to enable greater sharing and exchange of information, knowledge and resources.(Western Alliance proposal draft, objective 1) ➢ Cooperate and collaborate in the planning, managing and resourcing of projects that are of common interest to ➢ stakeholders in the four western Canadian provinces.(Western Alliance proposal draft, objective 2) ➢ Leverage greater funding in order to be able to undertake joint research and marketing projects that will benefit the western Canadian small bush fruit industry.(Western Alliance proposal draft, objective 3) ➢ Undertake common marketing strategies and programs to increase awareness, consumption and exports of ➢ Canadian small bush fruits and related products.(Western Alliance proposal draft, objective 5) ➢ Proposal submitted to CARDS on February 28, 2002. Subject to funding. • SFGA supplied information in December 2001 as part of the sharing initiative. • Drafted outline for "How to Market" fruit –planned for implementation in February 2002. Moved, see Project 6, Activity 3 for development of this project. • Informal co-operation through board members and IDO's in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Formal co-operation through participation in joint Nutrient Analysis of Saskatoon Berries and the SFGA Strategic and Business Plan 2002 by all three prairie provinces.	Ongoing 08/01/ 01 11/30/01 02/28/02 12/05/01 10/01/01 31/03/03	IDO actively pursuing this initiative. Future research activities will be investigated.

6. Provide E-commerce capabilities on the SFGA web site to increase the awareness of fruit available to processors and other interested parties. Results: Recently implemented the matchmaker component on the website which links sellers of fruit to buyers of fruit. All advertisements, press releases, brochures and recipe cards listed the toll free number and the web site on them. • Matchmaker feature has been used to provide contacts for processors, growers, distributors, chefs and trade officers. Information on the consumer side includes find a grower, find a product, find an outlet and bulk purchases. Information on the members side includes raspberry, strawberry and saskatoon berry nurseries. An expansion will include suppliers of trade materials.	Ongoing 07/15/01 Ongoing.	Website upgrade will maintain and allow more opportunities for growth in this area. New information is added as we receive it.
7. Write articles and feature stories about the fruit growers and their produce. Results: • During 2001, articles were submitted to Leader Post, Star Phoenix, Western Producer and SWNA papers. • Effort has been made to cultivate media contacts. Some of the highlights are articles in the Western Producer about mechanical harvesting and individual producer operations. Saskatoon Berries were featured in the Agribition NewsLetter in November 2002.	Ongoing 31/03/03	Similar approach to be taken for 2002. Ongoing.
8. Collaborate with Highways Department and Tourism Saskatchewan to put up signage. • This idea was explored and is not feasible until the signage laws change. Activity has not been pursued any further.	08/01/01 31/03/03	SFGA request RM support.

Project 3 – Online Fruit Trading Exchange *(formerly Berry Hotline & Listing Service)*
Objective: Implement a web based service to provide growers with up-to-date information regarding orchard management, industry events, information on the market opportunities, latest research statistics and pests on the move.
Measures:

- Increase growers access to information – www.saskfruit.com.
- Improve score card on communications.
- Create new revenue stream.

Activity	Date	Status
1. Develop and implement a high-end, interactive web site. Results: Website developed by Clickstream Interactive Group featuring: a grower map with contact information, information on the SFGA initiatives, information on upcoming events, recipes, information on fruit production.	07/15/00	Completed.
Board and IDO have initiated an upgrade and improvement to web site. This will allow a division of information between consumers/home gardeners and commercial producers/members, support new functions, and create fully automated site that SFGA staff can easily upload, edit or remove site content.	06/24/01-01/25/02	Upgrade and improvements to be completed by 11/01/01. Incomplete. Currently undergoing evaluation and testing phase to determine improvements and future direction.
• Website progress being reviewed and tested. Options for future improvements being sought.		
• Improvements to web site took longer than anticipated. Contracted new web developer, Direct West and new, improved site was functional by April, 2002. Site is now complete and supports new functions. It provides information to consumers as well as members, is user-friendly and can be managed in-house. Continued effort will be placed on improving content. • Categories include: About us, What's New, Events Calendar, In the News, Fruit Crops, Research, Membership Info, Association Members, Board Members, Contact Us, Message Board, Feedback, Market Place, Order Centre, Publications, Consumer Information, Recipes, Nutrition and Health. • Web site enhancements are complete as outlined above. New information added on regular basis. As markets expand beyond provincial boundaries, new features will be added. The greatest enhancements have been on the members side, oriented to growers of fruit, and they include: Links to fruit-related sites and members sites; What's New in 2003 (Nutrition Labelling, Nutrient Content and Health Claims, AIMS Agricultural Business Management Sponsorship Program, Feasibility Study on the Use of Off-Shore Migrant Labour, Aquiring a Taste for Cuisine Tourism…) and Oldies but Goodies (archived information that is still of use to membership); Fruit Crops (production information supplied by Dr. Bob Bors Advanced Fruit Production Class), Research (includes 60 research papers), Membership Info (including board minutes), Events Calendar… • Consumers side of the site contains many of the same categories, but information is less technical and oriented to	31/03/03	Activity completed.

potential buyers of fruit. Fruit recipes, Nutrition and Health, Upcoming events and the Marketplace (find a grower, find a product, find an outlet and bulk purchases) are some of the most popular areas. • New information is added on an ongoing basis. Web site is point of first contact. Ideas for future improvements are being considered as marketplace expands. • Over the last 9 months, July 2002 to April 2003, there have been 1859 visits to the site.		
4. Implement Talk mail. Results: • SFGA members were provided the option of receiving information regarding SFGA initiatives by talk mail over their phones or by e-mail. • All members are now on talk mail or email to facilitate reliable and accurate information dissemination. • Used to promote educational opportunities. • Email is also used as more people have computers and internet.	10/31/00 31/03/03	Complete.
5. Build integration of centralized industry information on the web site. Results: • Grower list and electronic version of the grower map on web site. • Updated annually.	 01/25/02 31/03/03	 Complete. Ongoing.
6. Identify and recommend equipment that will be needed to carry out web site development and on-going maintenance of the web site. Results: • Board met with Brian Smyth of Clickstream Interactive Group to identify and recommend areas that are necessary for on-going maintenance and development of the web site. • New developer contracted. Development and on-going maintenance provided by Direct West, IDO and secretary.	06/24/01 31/03/03	Complete. Complete.
7. Develop and present the web site design and budget to board for discussion and recommendations approval. Board authorized IDO to proceed with implementation of the plan. Improvements to website are to: • Separate information for two target audiences: 1)consumer/home gardener 2)commercial grower/member(password protected) • Improve accessibility & content • Provide expanded recipe listing(including 142 page food preservation data base) • Include (matchmaker) market place component. • Improve online membership directory • Provide an "ask the expert" service • Include online discussion forums • Include online newsletter submissions	 06/24/01	 Complete. In process. Complete. Complete. In process. Complete. Complete. Complete.

• Include online news clipping capability		Complete.
• Web site enhancements are complete as outlined above. New information added on regular basis. As marketplace expands, new features will be added.	31/03/03	Complete.
8. Source sponsorship for the web site to help fund the project. Planned activities are:	05/31/01	No activity.
• Approach chemical and equipment companies to advertise on our web site.		
• Contact other industry players to advertise/sponsor the web site.		
• A benefit of membership is the option to advertise or link to your own site. These advertisements or links are located on the members/consumers - marketplace and members/consumers - homepage depending if the member sells a product or service and who their customers might be. An example of an advertisement is the promotion of the Saskatchewan Berry Partners meeting. Examples of the links include the Dairy Farmers of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Domestic Fruit Program, Native Fruit Program, Saskatchewan Food Processors Association, Prairie Plant Systems, etc.		
9. Enable the SFGA web site to perform E-commerce type activities. Planned activities are:	06/24/01	
• Matchmaker service(fruit listing service)	07/15/01	Complete.
• Password protected	01/25/01	Complete.
• Automated update functions for grower information		In process.
• on-line submissions fo: ad inserts		In process.
• basic mini web sites for members posted beneath the SFGA web site	01/25/01	Fee for service, offered later
• on-line business to business exchange--create an online marketplace for members to exchange goods and services without having their own e-commerce capabilities.		Not at this time.
• Mini web sites have not been developed. Links to member sites are preferred method of supporting e-commerce.	Ongoing.	Ongoing.
10. Develop processes necessary for the on-going upkeep of the web site.		In process.
Up grade of web site will allow SFGA staff to easily upload, edit or remove site content.		
• Direct West has installed HTML editor to support this activity.	01/02/03	Complete.

Project 4 – Centralize Research Information

Objective: To centralize all relevant information related to production, post harvest, research, quality and marketing so growers have a single point of contact.

Measures:

- Fruit growers and diversified farmers utilize a fee based service.

Activity	Date	Status
1. Coordinate partnerships with outside agencies that may be offering workshops relative to the fruit industry to propose that the workshops help fund the research and development of the industry in the future. Results: • Board participation and sponsorship of SAF and other fruit related events not being hosted by SFGA • PFRA developed a seabuckthorn manual of which SFGA has sold **87** to date. • Native Fruit Development Program head, Richard St. Pierre, developed *Growing Saskatoons--A Manual for Orchardists*, which the SFGA promotes to all members through the membership guide. The Native Fruit Development Program sold 146 production manuals in 2001. • The Native Fruit Development Program sold 151 production manuals in 2002. • Developed membership guide to provide members with access to available literature and products. • SAF Pruning workshops for spring 2001, co-ordinated by Clarence Peters, Provincial Specialist, Fruit Crops. • Participated in the 2002 Fruit Production Extension Presentations with Clarence Peters, Provincial Fruit Specialist, Fruit Crops and Rural Service Centres. • $13,000 was raised to undertake the nutrient analysis of saskatoon berries. Contributors were: Prairie Fruit Growers Association, Fruit Growers Society of Alberta, Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association, Prairie Berries, Prairie Fruit Journal, Prairie Natural Processing Inc., D'nA, The Saskatoon Farm, The Berry Basket, and Heavenly Hills Orchard. • Summer Field Day and Tour - June 23, 2002. Event included tour of the Food Centre and the University of Saskatchewan. There were 55 growers in attendance. • SFGA Annual Meeting and Conference – November 1 & 2, 2002. There were 75 growers in attendance. • Website - Goal is that members side includes all available fruit research, password protected; hard copies will also be available for some of the papers; links to other sites where appropriate. Fruit research has been secured from ADF, Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agricultural Research Institute and individual researchers. To date, there are 60 research papers on the site and more to be included as they are received. • Industry Fact Sheet - compilation of latest Canada Census information and industry database findings. • Seasonal Workers Diagnostic - the Off-Shore Migrant Labour Program was brought to the attention of the SFGA by Ben Epp, Strawberry Ranch. Program administered by Human Resources Development Canada to allow off-shore labour to work in Saskatchewan. IDO completed industry diagnostic for submission to Human Resources Development Canada. Diagnostic was prepared using the results of the SFGA Growers Survey, the data base information, Census Canada results, Native Fruit Development Program results, SAFRR support, the processor	Ongoing 30/12/02 31/03/03	Working towards closer alliance with SAF extension agrologists. Membership guide complete and ongoing updates to follow.

survey, and the price survey. The program has been initiated with the SFGA as one of the participating groups. To date, one grower intends to participate in the pilot program. • Promotion and support of current health-related research – saskatoon berry antioxidant research completed by Dr. Kitts and Riverbend Plantation. • Nutrient Analysis of Saskatoon berries - complete nutrient analysis, including vitamins, funded by private industry and three provincial fruit associations. First joint initiative between Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba!		
2. Develop a basic Fruit Growing 101 on how to get started. Results: • Bob Bors, University of Saskatchewan, and Clarence Peters, Provincial Fruit Specialist, worked together to develop an introductory fruit-growing seminar. This was presented at November's annual conference and attended by 38 novice and experienced growers. • A 'Seager Wheeler Fruit Production School' has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2003 at the Travelodge in Saskatoon to address the needs of new and beginning growers on the production of apples, saskatoons, sour cherries, strawberries, raspberries and newer fruit such as honeysuckle. SFGA will attend to promote association and fruit growing in the province.	11/24/00 31/03/03	Complete. Ongoing activities include updating information basis latest research and presenting at future seminars.
3. Check with Alberta and Manitoba to see what they have done with regards to an introduction to fruit growing. • Discussions with Provincial Fruit Production Specialist to determine how Saskatchewan can be more involved in the updates and distribution. Provincial Fruit Specialist has provided some of the content of this manual.	08/31/00 30/1/03	Ongoing.
4. Arrange to carry resource information wherever possible to get a small source of revenue for handling and distribution. Results: See activity 1 above. • Annual meetings and resources are advertised through Prairie Fruit Journal and available to fruit industry. • Manuals continue to be sold and promoted through the association.		Ongoing.
5. Develop a catalogue resource listing and summary of the industry information and allow for the search functionality on the web site. • Have six primary fruit growing publications for display and promotion to the public and the SFGA members. • Research information is available directly on the web site and hard copies are available to loan to members.	05/31/01 31/03/03	Ongoing.

6. SFGA annual conference, featuring Research Across Saskatchewan: Seabuckthorn, Bill Schroeder, PFRA; Dwarf Sour Cherries, Bob Bors, U of S; Strawberry Crowns, Karen Tanino, U of S; Saskatoons, James Lokken, U of S; Native Plant Development Program, Richard St-Pierre; Provincial Observations, Clarence Peters, SAF. • 2002 Conference Theme was "The Farm Gate and Beyond" and focused on marketing. Speakers included: James Wiens, On-Farm Food Safety Trainer, Quality First – Ensuring a Safe Product Marlin Stangland, AFIF – HRD Business Skills, Developing a Business Plan, Overview and Pricing Module John Hemstad, Grey Owl Marketing Ltd., Challenge of Marketing a Premium Product Joan Hohenstein, Alberta Agriculture, To Market, To Market Bob Bors, U of S, How To Evaluate Varieties for a Potential Market Anne Ballantyne, NRC, CTN-IRAP, Competitive Intelligence Kevin Hursh, Charting the Course Ahead Clarence Peters, SAFRR, Summary of the 2002 Crop Year Grace Whittington, Riverbend Plantation, Inc., Report on Cleaning and Sorting Project Linda Metke, Treasure Valley Markets, Out in the Field. Don Robertson and Joan Merrill, Robertson Valley Markets, Out in the Field.	11/24/01 31/03/03	Ongoing. Conference Theme was well received and plans are to have a marketing component each year.
7. Share research results with other prairie provinces. This has been happening informally through both the Native Fruit Development Program and individual contacts at annual conferences. A more formal strategy has been initiated through the Western Alliance and helps to further our own objectives. The specific objective in the Western Canadian Small Bush Fruit Development Initiative is as follows: • Plan and implement a targeted, focused research program to enhance production, profitability, safety and sales.(Western Alliance proposal, objective 7) Results: SFGA participation in Western Alliance will maximize research resources and will avoid duplication. Subject to CARDS funding. Proposal submitted February 28, 2002. • Informal co-operation in CHC, with On-Farm Food Safety initiatives, accessing resources in Saskatchewan and Alberta. • Formal co-operation through participation in the Grading Standards for Saskatoons, Nutrient Analysis of Saskatoon Berries and the SFGA Strategic and Business Plan 2002.	11/30/01 02/28/02 31/03/03	Ongoing. Awaiting response to CARDS Application. Ongoing.

8. Minor Use Program – Application submitted to AFIF for the registration of Chemicals for Saskatchewan fruit crops, January 18, 2001.	01/18/02	Awaiting response to AFIF Application.
• Minor use registration of Bartlett Superior 70 Oil, insecticide for saskatoons in 2002, CHC AAFC has applied for approval of two more minor use pesticides.	17/12/02	Ongoing.
• As members of the Canadian Horticulture Council we now have a working process in place to expedite minor use registrations through the alignment of commodity classes in the horticulture industry. What this means to our industry is that if a chemical is already registered to be used on a commodity in that specific group the work required to get minor use registrations for the other commodity is minor and less costly. Therefore we should see speedier registrations in the future.		

Project 5– Quality Assurance

Objective: Investigate what is needed and how the fruit growers could implement a quality management process for saskatoons.

Measures:

- SFGA would have an image that stands for quality
- Certification of members who meet the standards
- Increase membership in the association

Activity	Date	Status
1. Work with The Food Centre and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Quality Assurance Department to design a quality management process. Research what the potato growers and similar industries such as blueberry and strawberry have done in this area as a starting point. Results: • Working through the Western Alliance, SFGA will achieve goals. The objectives of the Western Canada Small Bush Fruit Industry Development Initiative that are aligned to our goals are as follows: 1. Work together to influence and provide direction to national policies, regulations and programs to ensure favourable climate for the industry.(Western Alliance objective 4) 2. Identify and collaborate on the establishment of infrastructure to support and allow the industry to expand, e.g., grading systems, processing facilities, marketing agencies.(Western Alliance objective 6) 3. Plan and implement a targeted, focused research program to enhance production, profitability, safety and sales.(Western Alliance objective 7) • Formal working group did not get off the ground. SFGA has been providing leadership by maintaining contact with each association and initiating joint activities and projects.	07/31/01 11/30/01	Proposal will be written by February 15, 2002. Proposal submitted February 28, 2002 to CARDS. Awaiting response.
2. Involve AB & MB to get commitment to work jointly on this initiative. Results: • Alberta , Manitoba and Saskatchewan all participating in the On-Farm Food Safety Program developed by the Canadian Horticulture Council. • Saskatchewan is ahead of the other two provinces in this activity.	07/31/01 01/18/02	Continued research over the upcoming year. In process.

3. Develop grading standards and work with regulatory agencies to determine what would be expected. Results: • Letter of support was provided to Grace Whittington for her proposal to CARDS for "Developing a Primary Processing Co-operative for Saskatoon Berries." Report published in February 2001 Prairie Fruit Journal.	05/30/01	
• See above. SFGA working with SAF Quality Assurance Department to explore and develop an On-Farm Food Safety Program for saskatoon growers. Terry Grajczyk, Quality Assurance Specialist, SAF made a On-Farm Food Safety presentation at the November 2001 Conference.	07/31/01	Complete. IDO met with Terry Grajczyk and reviewed proposal developed by SAF.
• Andrew Sullivan, Provincial Specialist – Vegetable Crops prepared a proposal to AFIF Quality Assurance Fund, on behalf of ourselves and four other organizations for On-farm Food Safety – Quality Assurance Training for Saskatchewan's Horticulture Sector. The participating groups are: Saskatchewan Vegetable Growers Association, Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers Association, Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association, Saskatchewan Greenhouse Growers Association, and the Saskatchewan Nursery Trades Association. The training has been approved. The Train the Trainer session is set for March 2002 and the Presentations to Producer Groups are scheduled for November 2002 – March 2004. (Each commodity association would have three presentations in different regions of the province to ensure that all growers are aware of the program.) Concern is that these timelines will not fit the conclusion of the IDO project.	11/25/01 03/01/02- 03/01/04	Complete. Funding approved, Association must select a trainer and initiate program.
• SFGA participated in the Train the Trainer session with James Wiens, Springside Farms Co. Ltd. and Clarence Peters, SAFRR Provincial Fruit Specialist becoming Trainers for the SFGA. As a follow-up to this, James Wiens presented a Quality First session at the Annual Conference on November 1, 2002 to introduce the topic and determine the interest in a training session for fruit growers. From the positive response one of the first Canadian On-Farm Food Safety (COFFS) Seminars for fresh fruit and vegetables was held on February 21 and 22 in Saskatoon. About 20 attended. Topics covered included fertilizers and chemicals used on the production site, water quality, pest control, personal hygiene, good management practices including record keeping, crisis management and cleanliness of harvesting containers, packing materials, mechanical equipment and transportation vehicles. Potential sources of microbiological, chemical and physical hazards were identified when taking produce from the field through to the shipping point. Participants received CFIA-reviewed On-Farm Food Safety Guidelines manuals to use when inspecting their own operations. This manual is only available when enrolled in the seminar.	11/24/01 11/30/01	Work with members of SFPA to determine requirements. Work with Western Canada Small Bush Fruit Development Initiative Group to further develop national standards.
• Grading standards for saskatoons have been drafted. Growers from Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba have voluntarily shared grading standard information for saskatoons. A grower group validated the draft grading standards through observation, measurement, and taste tests. The SFGA will publish these results in the Prairie Fruit Journal this fall. See attached draft of grading standards.		
• Grading standards were presented at the SFGA Annual meeting. After much lively discussion on the topic it was suggested that processors report on their required grading standards. The discussion was tabled until the next annual meeting.		
• Grading standards were presented at the Alberta Horticulture Society Annual meeting for their input.		

• Grading standards were ratified at the SFGA Annual meeting, November 1, 2002 in Saskatoon. From this, they will be presented at a national level with the assistance of the Canadian Horticulture Council. • The resolution to include the frozen saskatoon berry standards in the processed products regulations was passed at the annual CHC conference held in March 2003. This will go a long way to ensuring quality standards as we move forward in the international market place.	01/11/02 11/03/03	Not complete.
4. Develop system of testing and establish benchmark criteria. • Value Chain group using grading standards to meet quality control requirements of Federated Co-operative. • Saskatchewan Berry Partners renewed contract with Federated Co-operative. • The fact that grading standards had been implemented and used with a large retail wholesaler gave credence to the work the Saskatoon Berry Partners are doing at trying to secure the export of 1 or 2 container loads of saskatoon berries into the United Kingdom in July 2003. • This group is also trying to establish several CFIA inspected facilities which allow for the handling of berries going into the export markets. There are initiatives underway to work with Alberta in this respect as well.	11/10/01 31/03/03	Ongoing. Ongoing.
5. Encourage growers to participate. Results: • Presentation by Jyoti Sahasrabudhe, Quality Certification Bureau, at the November 2000 annual conference to provide information on the different types of quality standards programs and which would be most applicable to our growers and processors. (Good Manufacturing Practices, ISO 9000 and HAACP) • On-Farm Food Safety Program has been implemented. As the awareness of the importance of this initiative in the food industry grows there will be more participation from the growers as they realize retails and processors are no longer willing to risk the implications of not having quality assurance processes in place.	11/30/01 02/22/03	Not complete. First session was a success and plans are underway to offer on an annual basis.
6. Promote program to public. • Media interest in Conference and On-Farm Food Safety workshop.	2002 02/22/03	No activity. Ongoing.
7. Pursue quality management certification for members. • This will be an ongoing activity.	2002 31/03/03	No activity. Ongoing.
8. Examine the issues related to collection, storage and transportation. Results: • Annual Conference 2000, presentation by Shika Agblor and Wendy Ziehl, Native Fruit Development Program, on their research in this area to date. • Annual Conference 2000, presentation by Carla Brenner and Trevor Durrant, U of S Agricultural Engineering	07/31/01	Complete.

students, on their prototype design for an in-field portable fruit cooler. Funding to continue was provided by a conference participant, Rick Pattison of Pattison Liquid Systems. • At the 2001 Field Day, Rick Pattison who funded the prototype design "In Field Cooler System" demonstrated the system that was developed by the ag students. Using it would be difficult due to size and shape. • A "How To" Article outlining collection, storage, and transportation is available on the SFGA website. • Grace Whittington, Riverbend Plantation presented the Report on Cleaning, Grading and Sorting Project to the SFGA Farm Gate and Beyond conference. • Leadership in this area has been provided by the SFGA and apart from the association, the value chain group, Saskatchewan Berry Partner Growers, who have had two meetings to form a grower directed company with a focus on marketing saskatoon berries collectively into the marketplace. The group plans to expand and include more growers to meet a commitment for this summer. This group has been using the grading standards approved by the SFGA membership at the November 1, 2002 Annual Meeting	31/03/03	Ongoing.

Note: There are a number of dependencies to be successful in implementing this program:

i. Regulating bodies can meet timelines.
ii. Grading equipment is available at a reasonable cost.
iii. Testing equipment is available at a reasonable cost.

Project 6– Market Opportunities
Objective: Help growers develop new markets for fruit and support the development of the necessary infrastructure.
Measures:

- Fruit growers work collaboratively to supply quantity and quality.
- Growers receive a fair price for the fruit.
- Fruit demand is greater than supply.
- U-Pick prices remain stable.

Activity	Date	Status
1. Conduct primary research on variety, volume and packaging requirements for markets targeted at large commercial retail distributors. (ie. Federated, Safeway, Dawn Foods, etc.). Results: • Frozen berries are being distributed by Federated Coops and the Value Chain group. The berries are packaged in 400 gm bags for the retail chain. • Value chain group, Saskatchewan Berry Partners, renewed contract with Federated Co-op and will supply an international market July 2003.	 07/31/01 31/03/03	In progress. Ongoing.
2. Identify the number of growers and acres available for commercial processing. Results: • Survey results included in previous report. With 21 of 28 growers having five or more acres, the information will provide processors with sufficient information to project supply. • The results of the SFGA survey, Census Canada's saskatoon berry acreage results, the Native Fruit Development Program's research on production and a telephone survey to the major fruit processors in Saskatchewan helped to determine the Fruit Production in Saskatchewan for 2002 (Industry Fact Sheet). This information, along with the statistics from Alberta and Saskatchewan predicts supply of saskatoon berries for the fresh, frozen and processed market.	04/31/01 31/03/03	Remaining large growers will be invited to participate in the survey. Updated annually.

3. Identify opportunities for uses of the fruit.
Results:
• Through the survey, 17 growers are processing their own fruit.
  • 51% making jams and jellies
  • 15% making fillings
  • 9% making syrups and sauces
  • 2% making beverages
  • 23% other items such as fruit leather and fruit bars
• November 1999 Annual conference had Graham Topp, a cottage winery owner, and Sandy Purdy, Prairie Berries owner, provide information on the type, quality and quantity of fruit used in their operations.
	Ongoing	As the market evolves, additional uses of fruit will emerge.

• "The Potential for Saskatchewan Fruit in the Food Ingredient Market" is a project being researched by the Industry Development Branch, SAF with the partners consisting of SAF, Saskatchewan Nutraceutical Network, SFGA, SFPA and Uof S.		
• At the 2001 Field Day, the meal included "Berry Delicious Desserts", demonstrating to the SFGA Members the feasibility of a Berry Festival. The desserts were extremely popular with not a crumb left. A berry festival open to the public would likely be met with success.	06/24/01	Berry Festival activity being explored.
• The November 2001 conference will include speakers who will make juices and wines. One of these speakers will be from a developed winery in B.C.	11/25/01	Complete.
• From project 2, Marketing workshop draft "How to Market Fruit", was further developed into management/marketing seminars, "Beyond the Farm Gate", for beginning and existing growers. Funding currently being sought. If additional funding cannot be secured, a modified strategy will be executed later in the year. Topics to include: goal setting, business plan, financial analysis, and marketing activities.	10/01/01 – 01/14/02	Ongoing, attempting to find funding for this expanded initiative.
• Conference 2001 included marketing topics: winery policy, wine and juice making presented by a B.C. processor, wine and juice panel discussion. There was much interest in this area. 84 conference delegates learned that opportunities exist for those individuals who wish to set up a cottage winery as well as those who wish to supply these wineries. There is also an opportunity to invite Dominic Rivard to hold a seminar for cottage wineries.		Ongoing. Will consider future seminars. SFGA members and board lobbying Sk.Liquor and Gaming Commission to change existing policy to be less limiting.
• Conference 2002 theme was marketing. There were 75 growers attending who learned from speakers and each other the importance of 'growing a product with the end in mind.'		
• Summer Field Day and Tour was at the University of Saskatchewan and the Food Centre. Growers and processors had the opportunity of seeing new varieties at the U of S and state of the art processing facilities at the Food Centre and meeting resource people who could help them achieve their goals.		
• Price survey was completed this summer and results were distributed to the membership.		
• Processor telephone survey helped to identify quantity of fruit processed in Saskatchewan.		
• Compiled fruit utilisation research from across Canada to determine what information is available. This research is available electronically on the web site as well as some available in hard copy through the association.	31/03/03	Ongoing.
• An activity identified in the 2002 Strategic and Business Plan is to determine what types of value-added uses, other than jams and jellies, are appropriate for saskatoon berries. To make good decisions, the SFGA needs to identify the trends, understand what the consumer wants and investigate the available opportunities.	31/03/03	Ongoing.
• Competitive Intelligence is next logical step as identified by Dr. Shika Agblor. The Prairie Fruit Growers Society of Alberta have expressed interest in collaborating on this initiative. Initial discussions with Dr. Janet Panford, IRAP to see if they would be willing to help us identify the trends, what the consumer wants and what opportunities are available.		

4. Educate growers how to use e-commerce on the web site. Results: Matchmaker component available. Letter sent to all growers explaining how to use the service. So far, two growers are currently listing their fruit for sale.	07/31/01	Matchmaker service up and running. Processors, wholesales will be sent letter and contacted directly to promote service.
5. Build partnership with the SFPA to bring growers and processors closer together. Results: • Preliminary discussion between IDO and SFPA have occurred. • SFPA promoted the matchmaker site to it's members. • Will continue to see if there are other opportunities to share (ie) marketing /educational training	11/30/01	Anticipate future activity.
6. Assess the infrastructure that will be necessary for expected production in years 2001, 2002 and recommend necessary actions to be taken. Results: • Refer to Appendix B from previous report for survey results which will facilitate the supply forecast. • Requested proposal from researchers in Saskatchewan to address issues of supply and demand. SFGA board reviewed and evaluated. Decided to review recently completed research studies, contact SFPA to find out what research they have conducted, and present proposals at the next Western Canada Small Bush Fruit Development Initiative meeting as they deal with interprovincial demand issues. • Past-President, Sandy Purdy presented the 2002 Strategic and Business Plan to the membership at the SFGA Annual Meeting. Her summary outlined the opportunities and roadblocks which will impact success of the fruit industy. • Further to this, Past-President and IDO have made presentations to government and funding agencies outlining the progress of the industry and 'walking them through' the strategic plan and business plan.	Ongoing annually. 01/19/02 11/01/02 31/03/03	Will continue to work with the two processors in Saskatchewan who have facilities for grading and sorting saskatoons. In process. Proposals received from agricultural economists and reviewed by board. k Board, IDO and secretary will investigate opportunities further. Ongoing.
7. Identify road blocks in securing new market opportunities as they arise. Results: • The SFGA Board of Directors meet every two months to review and update the strategic plan. Adjustments in project activities are aligned with emerging issues and opportunities. Progress is monitored and specific future activities delegated. • SFGA Board members and ex-officios participate in stakeholder meetings and strategic planning sessions. Harvesting, cooling, grading, packaging and freezing facilities have been identified as the road blocks to success. Saskatchewan Berry Partners, within their group and expanding to include new growers, are working to develop infrastructure to handle fruit in each quadrant of province.	 31/03/03	4-6 in-person full day meetings annually. Follow-up conference calls held in between. Ongoing.